

Zapsalis

Zapsalis is a genus of dromaeosaurine theropod dinosaurs. It is a tooth taxon, often considered dubious because of the fragmentary nature of the fossils, which include teeth but no other remains.

The type species is *Zapsalis abradens*, from the Judith River Formation of Montana, dating to 75 million years ago, during the Campanian stage. Additional teeth attributed to *Z. abradens* have been found in the Dinosaur Park Formation, also dated to about 75 Ma ago. While *Zapsalis*-like teeth have been found in other formations dating to various time periods and assigned to this genus, they most likely belong to new genera and species.^[1]

In 1876 Edward Drinker Cope named *Zapsalis abradens* based on a tooth found in Montana,^[2] presently specimen AMNH 3953. The generic name is derived from Greek *za~*, "thorough", and *psalis*, "pair of scissors". The specific name means "abrading" in Latin.

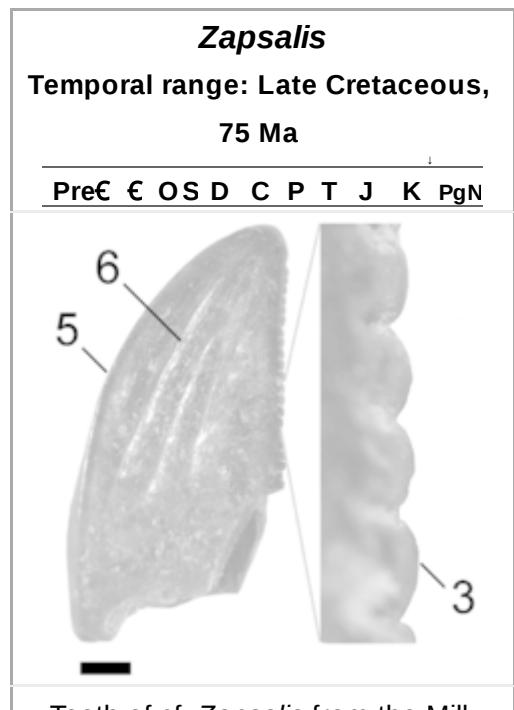
In 1964 Richard Estes synonymised *Zapsalis* with *Paronychodon*,^[3] but in 2002 Julia Sankey e.a. concluded the teeth represented a separate "?*Dromaeosaurus* Morphotype A".^[4] In 2013 Derek Larson and Philip Currie recognised *Zapsalis* as a valid taxon from the Judith River and Dinosaur Park Formation. The teeth are typified by a combination of rounded denticles, straight rear edge and vertical grooves. Similar teeth from the older Milk River Formation were referred to a *cf. Zapsalis*.^[1] In 2019, Currie and Evans announced that the *Zapsalis* teeth from the Dinosaur Park Formation represented the second premaxillary tooth of *Saurornitholestes langstoni*, in a paper describing a complete skull of that species.^[5]

See also

■ Timeline of dromaeosaurid research

References

1. Larson, D. W.; Currie, P. J. (2013). Evans, Alistair Robert (ed.). "Multivariate Analyses of Small Theropod Dinosaur Teeth and Implications for Paleoecological Turnover through Time" (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3553132>). *PLoS ONE*. 8 (1): e54329. Bibcode:2013PLoS...854329L (<https://ui.adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/2013PLoS...854329L>). doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0054329. PMC 3553132 (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3553132>). PMID 23372708 (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23372708>).



Tooth of cf. *Zapsalis* from the Milk River Formation, with close up of denticles

Scientific classification

Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
<i>Clade:</i>	Dinosauria
<i>Clade:</i>	Saurischia
<i>Clade:</i>	Theropoda
Family:	†Dromaeosauridae
Subfamily:	†Dromaeosaurinae
Genus:	† <i>Zapsalis</i>
	Cope, 1876

Type species

†*Zapsalis abradens*

Cope, 1876

2. Cope, E.D. (1876). "On some extinct reptiles and Batrachia from the Judith River and Fox Hills Beds of Montana". *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia*. **28**: 340–359.
3. Estes, R., 1964 *Fossil vertebrates from the Late Cretaceous Lance Formation, eastern Wyoming*. University of California Publications in Geological Sciences 49. pp. 180
4. Sankey, J.T.; Brinkman, D.B.; Guenther, M.; Currie, P.J. (2002). "Small theropod and bird teeth from the Late Cretaceous (Upper Campanian) Judith River Group, Alberta". *Journal of Paleontology*. **76**: 751–763. doi:10.1666/0022-3360(2002)076<0751:stabtf>2.0.co;2 (<https://doi.org/10.1666%2F0022-3360%282002%29076%3C0751%3Astabtf%3E2.0.co%3B2>).
5. Currie, Philip J.; Evans, David C. (2019). "Cranial Anatomy of New Specimens of *Saurornitholestes langstoni* (Dinosauria, Theropoda, Dromaeosauridae) from the Dinosaur Park Formation (Campanian) of Alberta". *The Anatomical Record*. doi:10.1002/ar.24241 (<https://doi.org/10.1002%2Far.24241>). PMID 31497925 (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31497925>).

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